

**CITY OF NORTH LAS VEGAS
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

June 20, 2007

Website - <http://www.cityofnorthlasvegas.com>

CALL TO ORDER

4:30 P.M., Council Chambers, 2200 Civic Center Drive, North Las Vegas, Nevada

ROLL CALL

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Michael L. Montandon
Mayor Pro Tempore William E. Robinson
Councilwoman Stephanie S. Smith
Councilwoman Shari Buck
Councilman Robert L. Eliason

STAFF PRESENT

City Manager Gregory Rose
Assistant City Manager Samuel Chambers
Assistant City Manager Maryann Ustick
City Attorney Carie Torrence
City Clerk Karen L. Storms
Parks and Recreation Director Mike Henley
Senior Assistant to the City Manager Kenny Young
Chief Deputy City Clerk Anita Sheldon

VERIFICATION

Karen L. Storms, CMC
City Clerk

BUSINESS

1. PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION REGARDING THE TROPICAL/BRUCE NEIGHBORHOOD PARK PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN

Parks and Recreation Director Mike Henley said the purpose of the meeting was to update Staff and the public on the progress of the project and to ask for direction on proposals that had been developed.

Landscape Architect John Jones recapped the budget and time line of the project and its relation to the Centennial Statz park. He said the Parks and Recreation Department was working with the Planning Division of Engineering Services to save money on the planning process, but they planned to hire a consultant to develop the final design documents. The park was scheduled to open by late spring of 2010 at the latest. Mayor Montandon said he hoped it would be sooner. Mr. Jones said the budget allocated was probably not adequate so the project needed to be phased. He said 2,500 linear feet of half-street improvements plus utilities needed to be constructed in the first phase, which the Bureau of Land Management could not fund. It was estimated that six to ten acres of the park could be developed in the first phase. He showed the park site and surrounding area on the City Map. He said Centennial Statz and Craig Ranch each had two baseball fields planned. The recommendation, in accordance with Staff's original direction for the Tropical/Bruce park, was for inclusion of three Olympic-sized lighted soccer fields. He outlined the plans for additional features of the park. He asked for Staff's comments and direction to determine the costs and challenges of the project, and input from the public. He said the department could then move forward and return with a report on public response and a phasing recommendation.

Councilman Eliason entered Chambers at 4:39 P.M.

Councilwoman Buck asked if there was a total of ten adult-size soccer fields, including the seven at Park Highlands, and Mr. Jones said that was correct. Councilwoman Buck then confirmed with Mr. Jones that the playgrounds were lighted and there were doors on the bathroom stall.

Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson asked about the cost of the consultants. Mr. Jones replied that it typically cost 6% to 10% of construction costs. In this case he thought it would be in the 6% to 8% range because the project was not extensive. Construction was projected to cost approximately 6.1 million dollars. Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson felt that was too large a sum for the consultant.

Mayor Montandon thought construction could realistically be completed by July 2009. City Manager Gregory Rose explained the time line given was a worst-case scenario and the intention was to complete the project as quickly as possible.

Director Henley explained during preparation of the time line they had taken into account the fact that it was difficult to get the public to participate during July and August as people were typically out of town. Mayor Montandon said he didn't think this particular project was complicated or required extensive public participation. Director Henley said they wanted to be considerate of the fact that the public had expressed the desire to participate in projects that impacted their neighborhoods.

Councilwoman Smith agreed that the park was not complicated and it had been presented at public hearings, so public participation was anticipated to be minimal. City Manager Rose indicated that the intent was to inform the public about the options and get their comments. Councilwoman Smith agreed with the intent but thought it would not require a long time frame, and City Manager Rose agreed that it would not. Councilwoman Smith confirmed with Director Henley that a soccer field and a baseball field were included in the plans for Sandstone Ridge. She pointed out that traffic was an issue. Director Henley said in his report, he cautioned about the trend toward putting many high-impact uses into neighborhoods, and Councilwoman Smith said they needed to be aware of the repercussions of that.

Mayor Montandon said he believed the project was on the right track.

ACTION: PRESENTATION GIVEN. STAFF DIRECTED TO MOVE FORWARD WITH CURRENT COURSE OF ACTION

2. QUARTERLY UPDATE ON NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES.

City Manager Gregory Rose introduced Senior Assistant to the City Manager Kenny Young to give the quarterly update on the Neighborhood Services' performance measures and the Forty-Block Program.

Senior Assistant Young explained that the Housing and Neighborhood Services Department was directly involved in helping to improve quality of life in the neighborhoods in the City of North Las Vegas. He said the ultimate goal was to make each neighborhood a desirable and healthy place to live, work and play, and to make the City of North Las Vegas a first-class city. The goals of the department were to design programs and services for residents, to provide cost effective solutions to challenges, and to achieve the vision of North Las Vegas. The Community Development Department had developed and grown to such an extent that the City divided it into the Economic Development Department and the Planning and Development Department. Again because of the growth, the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services became part of the City Manager's Office. He said with the growth came challenges and opportunities. He went on to explain the challenges and opportunities within the subdivisions of the department.

Senior Assistant Young said code enforcement, graffiti abatement and coordination of federal grants and neighborhood cleanup had been focuses so far. The Neighborhood Beautification Team was on track to clean up sections one through twenty-one, which covered 378 "shoulder" miles, by the end of the month. One hundred and five special

projects had been completed. 1,452 yards of waste were disposed of and the City saved \$157,000 utilizing community service workers. The Community Lending Tool Program was implemented and generated great appreciation from the residents. He said there was tremendous participation from community volunteers. He said the cleanup resulted in a dramatic increase in ability to assist Fire and Police Departments and residents. He said it was apparent that residents took better care of their own property when they saw the City took care of its issues. A survey was sent to North Las Vegas residents and more than three hundred residents responded, which was the highest survey participation so far, and the majority of the responses were favorable. He said more staff and funding were needed for the growth and maintenance of the beautification project, as well as restructuring of some of the job descriptions, which had become very complex and needed to be clarified with the Human Resources Department.

Senior Assistant Young said the code enforcement team hired a new manager, passed a nuisance ordinance and held quarterly meetings to educate the Homeowner's Associations and neighborhood groups. He said challenges included abandoned vehicles, investor-owned homes and undeveloped lots. He stated when the Information Technology (IT) Department completed the Mobile Highway Efficiency Project, the City of North Las Vegas would be the leading code enforcement Division in the country in the aspect of IT. The project allowed code enforcement officials to enter information and print citations from the field, eliminating the need to duplicate the data in the office setting. In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson's question, Senior Assistant Young said the project was paid for by the money the City received annually from Republic Services.

Working with Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, the graffiti abatement team arrested over 45 people and performed over 15,000 graffiti abatements and 4,800 sign abatements. Response time was down to 48 hours. The department helped pass Assembly Bill 14, which strengthened graffiti laws and increased fines. The department partnered with volunteer groups and schools and promoted education about graffiti and vandalism. Survey results were generally good. The team worked with the Nevada Department of Transportation and Union Pacific Railroad on a design that would discourage graffiti on the I-215 overpass. The graffiti team also worked diligently to clean up and prevent graffiti on signs.

Councilwoman Buck asked whether the people who put their phone numbers on the signs were prosecuted, and Senior Assistant Young replied they aggressively pursued and prosecuted individuals when they could be identified, but those people change phone numbers and locations frequently to avoid prosecution. He confirmed for Councilwoman Smith that they also worked to prevent people from putting up their own signs.

Under federal programs, Senior Assistant Young went on to explain that a Housing Rehabilitation and Emergency Repair Program and a Buyer Assistance Program had been developed. The environmental review documentation was completed, which allowed the City to transfer the funds from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a new library project. He explained that they had to adhere to the regulations of the Uniform Relocation Act Provisions for progression on the Windsor Park Project. He said the City also needed to look at becoming its own entitlement, separate from Clark County, and additional staff would be needed to accomplish that goal.

A volunteer program had been implemented and was active in many areas in the community. There was only one staff member coordinating all the volunteer programs, and there was no place that served as a base for the volunteers.

Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson objected to the requests for more staff. City Manager Rose explained that in the efforts to develop the Housing and Neighborhood Services Department to effective levels for the community, they were informing Council that staffing was a challenge. Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson said that he was not willing to approve more staff for the department. City Manager Rose responded that Council had to decide whether they approved of the results that had been gained from the Department and wanted them to continue. He said they could continue with the existing staff, but would be unable to expand services.

Councilman Eliason asked whether the local non-profit organizations had been asked to donate space, and Senior Assistant Young said they would look at that option, but felt those organizations probably faced the same issues in regard to their own needs. Councilman Eliason asked if the City could utilize the non-profit organizations' volunteers, and Senior Assistant Young said the City already coordinated with a number of volunteer groups and utilized their services, and worked to recruit volunteers at many of the City's community events.

Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson said he realized the programs and the City required more staff, but felt they could utilize volunteers instead of additional City employees for many of the events. Councilman Eliason asked whether there were any projects that the Eagle Scouts could help with and Senior Assistant Young said they could help with many projects.

Senior Assistant Young continued, explaining that the Neighborhood Outreach Program assisted neighborhoods and Home Owner's Associations (HOAs) and developed the Neighborhood Registration Program and the Neighborhood Matching Rent Program. They had reported on day labor issues and made recommendations. They did a survey of the Forty-Block Area and planned to use the results as a foundation for planning

community development. The survey results would also be useful to submit to HUD for better flexibility in the use of funding from the federal government. Many of the residents responded positively to surveys about their community and quality of life, and there were many opportunities for improvement. He went on to outline the challenges in the community, including trespassing within HOA communities. He said there needed to be a way for people in communities to access services without having to call 911 for non-emergency situations. Another issue was the large number of investor-owned homes. He said the City needed to provide residents with the resources and education for accessing services. Senior Assistant Young mentioned the high volume of 911 calls received from Spanish-speaking people and the difficulties of that situation.

Councilman Eliason asked if street vendors selling food were still a problem, and Senior Assistant Young replied that had not been reported in a couple of months, though there had been instances of unlicensed restaurants. Senior Assistant Young said there were a number of neighborhood programs, including the Neighborhood Registration Program, Neighborhood Leadership Program, the Matching Grant Program and the Neighborhood Youth Initiative. However, there was no staff dedicated solely to neighborhood outreach initiatives. In response to the objections that had come up about staffing, he explained that most of the neighborhood outreach efforts were handled by Assistant City Manager Maryann Ustick, Assistant to the City Manager Michelle Bailey-Hedgepeth, Neighborhood Outreach Manager Kathy Somers, himself, and the Volunteer Coordinator, Dr. Shelia Thompson. He said they did the best they could, but they also had other responsibilities and he felt their time could be more effectively utilized. The other staff were federally funded and had to be used solely for federal programs. He said neighborhood outreach could build partners and trust in the community and could identify opportunities to work together. They could help the community to facilitate problem-solving and access services without relying on the City. It would help the citizens to become self-reliant and take ownership of their neighborhoods. He said it was beneficial to the City to partner with the community, the community would add resources as well. He said the City of Las Vegas had 17 staff members in the neighborhood initiatives area. Seven were professional staff that worked directly in the community. Henderson had three people working in neighborhood outreach initiative. He felt the demographics of North Las Vegas presented unique problems and more complicated issues, yet there was no staff dedicated to neighborhood outreach. He thought it was vital to create small community resource centers, which did not have to be staffed or operated by the City. One option was to ask HOAs to donate their community centers for such use.

Senior Assistant Young asked Council for direction for the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services. He said he had asked Council a year ago to take a risk on investing in the Graffiti and Beautification programs, and he was there to be accountable for those programs.

Councilwoman Buck commended Senior Assistant Young on his efforts and expressed her full support.

Councilwoman Smith said with the exception of public safety, neighborhood outreach services were the best investment for the City. She said the Wards needed to support each other and this was a perfect opportunity for liaison between the Wards. She supported more staffing for the department, and suggested a youth council. She said the community had to be safe, clean, and attractive, and people's needs had to be met.

Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson said Wards 1 and 2 were not in as good shape as Wards 3 and 4, so he did not support all the additional employees that were requested for the division. He acknowledged they needed a place to work from and more staff, but it cost the taxpayers money and attention needed to be paid to that as well. He thought much had been accomplished and much more needed to be accomplished but was concerned about the cost of additional staffing.

Councilman Eliason complimented the clean-up crew but said there needed to be some way to inform the public that it represented their tax dollars at work. He said there needed to be a solution to maintain the areas that had been cleaned up. He said the homeless people had overrun Owens Avenue and something had to be done about it. Senior Assistant Young responded that a cleanup of the area was scheduled but there was a Homeless Protocol that had to be abided by. He said Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department had not abided by the protocols and had pushed the homeless people into North Las Vegas. Councilman Eliason said Code Enforcement personnel were unfairly citing business owners because of the homeless people who stayed in front of their businesses.

Senior Assistant Young commended his staff. Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson complimented the growth of the United Way program. He spoke about the downtrodden people in Wards 1 and 2 and said much more needed to be done to help them. He felt the City had not done enough over the years.

Mayor Montanton commented it was a dilemma and much needed to be done, yet people wanted taxes lowered. City Manager Rose said the department had produced the desired results and would continue on its course.

ACTION: UPDATE GIVEN

PUBLIC FORUM

Dr. Shelia Thompson, Neighborhood Services Coordinator, said she had over 13 years in neighborhood services and while she felt the City was behind in its efforts, she was committed to help enhance the department and the citizens.

City Manager Rose said he had every confidence in Senior Assistant Young's leadership and he was very comfortable with the results produced. Dr. Thompson said she believed they were all leaders.

ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:42 P.M.

MOTION: Mayor Montandon

SECOND: Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson

AYES: Mayor Montandon, Mayor Pro Tempore Robinson, Council Members Smith, Buck and Eliason

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

APPROVED: August 15, 2007

Mayor Michael L. Montandon

ATTEST:

Karen L. Storms, CMC
City Clerk